

AGENDA
Friday, October 21st, 2011
Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee

V. Old Business

K. Formalize Application Process and Application for ARTP to Offer CFSTES Online/Hybrid Classes

Over the past few months, several community colleges, which are State Fire Marshal approved "Regional Accredited Training Programs", have expressed interest in delivering the Company Officer classes in a Hybrid\Internet format.

They have requested information on the approval process and requirements to deliver these classes.

Due to time and inactivity in this regard, an inquiry was made by Mary Wilshire on October 3, 2011, see below, requesting background on what was approved and a review of the documents that facilitated the Hybrid\Internet delivery of the Company Officer classes. The following are excerpts from the Final Report approved by STEAC and the State Board of Fire Services facilitating this process, other documents and the official action taken by STEAC at their meetings approving and facilitating this initiative.

-----Original Message-----

From: Wilshire, Mary <Mary.Wilshire@fire.ca.gov>

To: 'Dan Coffman' <dancoffman@aol.com>

Cc: Purkeypile, Mark <Mark.Purkeypile@fire.ca.gov>; Slaughter, Rodney <Rodney.Slaughter@fire.ca.gov>; Erickson, Brandon <Brandon.Erickson@fire.ca.gov>

Sent: Mon, Oct 3, 2011 12:25 pm

Subject: RE: October 21, 2011 STEAC Meeting Reminder-Agenda Items

Dan,

Just as an FYI regarding On Line hybrid classes, I am doing some historical research to finalize SFT procedure manual and requirements due to several other colleges recently inquiring about participating in this delivery system.

I have a few gaps in information that you may be able to answer or direct me to the source. I have found documents and reports presented back in 2008 to STEAC and in 2009 to SBFS that have been very helpful and are my point of reference for my questions below:

1. Who was on the committee that provided the report and is referred in the minutes?
2. I cannot find any documentation on when SFT approved for Fire Prevention 1A/1B to be entirely on line? Can you direct me to the STEAC/SBFS time frame those classes were presented by the committee to be fully on line?
3. In the minutes of the SBFS meeting of 2/25/09 it was stated that the courses developed by the volunteer instructors for this beta test be given to SFT for duplication and made available for instructors interested in teaching on-line courses. I cannot find where this ever transpired. Can you provide the courses that are being taught on line to me, or is there someone from the committee I should contact?

There are some other gaps in information that are making the development of the procedure difficult, however I think I will be able to work those out internally. Your response to my questions will assist me in creating a comprehensive procedure by the next meeting. Feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Thanks!
Mary Wilshire
State Fire Training
916-327-2129

-----Original Message-----

From: Dan Coffman <dancoffman@aol.com>

To: Mary.Wilshire <Mary.Wilshire@fire.ca.gov>

Sent: Mon, Oct 3, 2011 3:08 pm

Subject: October 21, 2011 STEAC Meeting Reminder-Agenda Items

Mary;

1. Who was on the committee that provided the report and is referred in the minutes?

At the STEAC Meeting on March 24, 2006, a proposal was made to investigate the feasibility of presenting some of the classes, or portions of the classes, in the Fire Officer Series, in a distance learning format.

An Ad-hoc Committee of STEAC members was appointed, with David Senior as the Chair, joined by Dan Coffman, Mary Jennings and Mark Romer. This Committee was expanded to include additional members from the Training Officers Rich Cabral, Mike Jennings and Tom Pambianco.

2. I cannot find any documentation on when SFT approved for Fire Prevention 1A/1B to be entirely on line? Can you direct me to the STEAC/SBFS time frame those classes were presented by the committee to be fully on line?

The final report was accepted as recommended at the 10-17-2008 STEAC Meeting

3. In the minutes of the SBFS meeting of 2/25/09 it was stated that the courses developed by the volunteer instructors for this beta test be given to SFT for duplication and made available for instructors interested in teaching on-line courses. I cannot find where this ever transpired. Can you provide the courses that are being taught on line to me, or is there someone from the committee I should contact?

I am not sure what happened here, however, most of the instructional material (intellectual property) is owned by the book publisher, thus available for purchase. I have provided my material to instructors that ask. My syllabus is attached.

I have attached several documents that may help. If you want, when I come to the STEAC Meeting this month, I will bring a CD of my stuff.

Dan

Attachments:

STEAC_FO_Beta_Test_Final_Approval.pdf

STEAC_Minutes_10-17-2008.pdf

STEAC_Minutes_4-10-2009.pdf

STEAC_Minutes_7-17-2009.pdf

STEAC_onlinehybrideliveryPolicy.pdf

AHC_Management_1_Syllabus_Fall_2010_Term_1_CRN_20668.doc

Fire Officer Classes Beta Test for Internet\Hybrid Delivery

Over the past three years, numerous changes in the California Fire Service Training and Education System (CFSTES) have been proposed, developed, tested and implemented. This process has been facilitated by the California Fire Service Training and Education Strategic Plan known as "Blueprint 20\20".

Among these proposals, the California Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee (STEAC) appointed an Ad-Hoc committee, at its' meeting on March 24, 2006, to investigate the feasibility of presenting the Fire Officer classes on the internet or in a hybrid (internet\classroom) delivery method.

The following report will provide an overview on the Beta Test and provide the Ad-hoc Committee's findings and recommendations to STEAC, the California State Board of Fire Services and California State Fire Marshal, Chief Kate Dargan for their consideration, modification and adoption.

This report is respectfully submitted by the Level 1 Internet/Hybrid Beta Test Committee, a subcommittee of the State Training and Education Advisory Committee.

Conclusions and Recommendations

While a call for specific modifications can be found in each class, a general consensus in the input received from all sources, particularly from the instructors and students, and supported by the Ad-Hoc Committee indicate the following:

Recommendation # 1: The courses residing in the CFSTES Fire Officer Series of classes can be successfully delivered on the internet and in an Internet/Hybrid fashion.

The recommendation that the Fire Officer classes be taught in an internet/hybrid fashion as an option to traditional classroom delivery in no way mandates this delivery method and is not designed to replace the classroom delivery of any of the Level I classes.

Recommendation # 2: As the Company Officer Certification Program is being redesigned to meet the new NFPA 1021 and the needs of the California Fire Service, we recommend that the curriculum committees design the courses with the Internet/Hybrid course option in mind. Course outlines should clearly identify learning domains that may be taught online and learning domains that must be taught in the classroom.

Recommendation # 3: Each curriculum development committee should have at least one person with online instructional experience to assist in identifying learning domains suitable for Web Based Instruction.

Recommendation # 4: Explore the use of Standardized "off the shelf" textbooks and other courseware to be used for these CFSTES classes. Exams would be tied to these textbooks and courseware.

Recommendation # 5: The generic courses developed by the volunteer instructors for this beta test be given to SFT for duplication and made available for instructors interested in teaching online courses.

Items needing further consideration #1: A number of students enrolled in internet/hybrid classes do not finish classes primarily due to poor time management and unfamiliarity with on-line learning.

If the maximum number of students for a level 1 class is forty and the college class fills, by the time the students come to the classroom to sign up for the SFM course only 25 out of the 40 have completed sufficient coursework to finish the class. This leaves a waiting list of students not able to get into the class at the beginning of the course and many empty seats in the classroom.

Due to the dropout rate after the start of the college classes, and the class size limit set by State Fire Training (SFT), many students, who want to enroll in the CFSTES classes, are precluded from enrolling.

The committee would like further consideration that when CFSTES classes are taught in an online/hybrid format SFT allow a higher number of students to enroll in the college class than the SFT limit. We further believe in-class numbers should remain consistent with SFT maximums. This means when Internet/Hybrid classes meet in the classroom SFT maximums will be enforced.

Items needing further consideration # 2: The Management 1 class was taught six times during the beta test. The instructor and students have recommended the present course be taught completely online without the 8 hour in-class session required in the beta test. They feel this is a purely an academic course. The committee has some reservations about this but feel further consideration should be made.

Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee Minutes, October 17, 2008

VI. Old Business

5. On-line Hybrid Beta Test/Presentation of Final Report

Issue: Update (Information Only)

Discussion: D. Senior indicated that the work group conducted the Beta Test, as was discussed at the last meeting when a draft report was handed out. Included in the meeting's handouts was the final report. On page 19 of the report, STEAC members were provided the conclusions and recommendations based on the testing. The only items reflecting any change were on pages 17-18, where statistics were added to detail students' habits of accessing the class. D. Senior explained that anytime students take a class, regardless of which platform is being used, the instructor can go in and find out when people are accessing the classes, which part of the classes they are accessing the most, and other general related information. He used this example to drive home the idea that online classes are very flexible and students tend to enjoy that aspect. The recommendations remained virtually the same, although, a couple of points that had already been addressed were removed. There were two items to be considered, for which the workgroup didn't feel it necessary to make recommendations.

First, he acknowledged that the drop-out rate in online classes is between 30%-50%, usually due to an inability to manage the workload or failure to appear to the classroom portion. This creates the situation where out of a given class of 25, the instructor may end up only having 10 active students. The question posed was whether they can allow more people into the hybrid classes, so they can do their didactic online and then have the maximum amount actually show up to the classroom portion and guarantee that there would be no more than that amount in the sit-in class.

The work group didn't have a clear way to resolve this issue but thought it was worth considering. M. Jennings didn't think it was prudent to make any blanket statements about how this could be accomplished for the simple reason that programs offered by community colleges and universities, and the formats in which they are presented, differ so greatly.

She felt that the project should move forward with registration and attendance issues still being explored in detail, but using a broader perspective. It was suggested that what might have to happen is each college would present a proposal, to be approved or disapproved by SFT, as to how their online course would be conducted. The second issue concerned feedback from instructors and students who took the Management 1 class and felt that it is all didactic and did not see a reason for having an 8 hour in-class session. The work group did not feel that they wanted to make this recommendation but thought the issue should be brought before STEAC to allow the committee to discuss it further.

The issue of instructor qualifications was also discussed as the work group recognizes that instructors need to have attended several online instruction methodology classes before they can teach effectively online. D. Coffman questioned what they envisioned would be entailed in order to teach this class again in the online format. M. Richwine responded that based on what had been discussed, a process would most likely need to be created where an application is sent to SFT to teach online classes. This would establish a system of checks and balances that would allow SFT to ascertain whether there is proper IT support for that online component while ensuring that the instructors have the training essential to this function. It would also allow an opportunity to discuss the over-enrollment issue. M. Richwine shared a suggestion, made by the CA Fire Technology Directors, that SFT could hold instructor workshops throughout the state in order to introduce this technology, in cooperation with community colleges and instructors who are interested in having it available. M. Richwine speculated that the timeframe for implementing this project would be about a year, considering there are still some issues that need to be worked through, including changes that would have to be captured in regulations. He felt the best way to approach it would be to have the online work group continue to meet, take their report to the State Board of Fire Services (SBFS), and start working to flush out any additional issues.

D. Senior advised that while the work group continues its participation, it would be worthwhile to have SFT lead this portion of the process in case questions/issues arise. He then clarified that the motion would be to accept the recommendations based on the work group's finding that online instruction does, in fact, work for SFT.

MOTION: R. Myers moved to accept the final report. M. Romer seconded the motion.

Action: The motion carried unanimously.

Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee Minutes, April 10, 2009

V. Old Business

5. On-line Hybrid Course Delivery Implementation Plan

Issue: Delivery Requirements and Draft Agreement

Discussion: C. Owen reminded the committee that the final report for on-line hybrid delivery was accepted by STEAC at the previous meeting and it had been noted that in order to move forward, there were some administrative aspects that needed to be resolved. These issues included the instructor registration environment, changes to the Course Information and Required Materials Manual, and changes to the SFT Procedures Manual. The hybrid beta test subcommittee met to discuss some of the issues at hand and determined that it was going to be too labor intensive for SFT staff to go through a separate registration process for online instructors; it would be better handled by having the Accredited Regional Training Programs (ARTP) maintain documentation for Instructors and ensure that all the requirements in the CIRM and Procedures Manual are being met. The records would then be available for review upon request by State Fire Training. C. Owen will be working closely with R. Slaughter to have the Procedures Manual and CIRM changes in the next regulatory package.

She provided the committee members a draft agreement that was still being fine tuned, for the ARTPs to complete, sign and have approved by SFT in order to deliver the class. It listed all the requirements the ARTPs would have to be willing to abide by in order to conduct an online course, including instructors with experience teaching the specific course at least once in the classroom format prior to teaching in the online format, providing those instructors with training in whichever particular platform the class is delivered through, and allowing SFT access to review or monitor as they deem appropriate. Also, student evaluations will include the online portion of the class and will be returned to SFT upon the class's completion, the delivery platform must be able to track and provide reporting for web statistics upon request by SFT, and ARTPs and community colleges will be required to disclose to students, prior to course registration, that SFT will have access to their grades, information, and class work. J. Connors questioned whether teaching the course in the classroom format once was sufficient experience to merit online instructing status. D. Coffman assured that this requirement provides the

community college or ARTP discretion in determining experience qualifications, taking the burden off of State Fire Training. He explained that the provision just states that you have to “demonstrate,” and if a community college deems that this is accomplished after teaching the subject three times, it is entirely their decision. A. Hamilton felt that a statement should be added suggesting that the ARTPs can impose more stringent policy. D. Senior thought it was important to include that SFT should be able to log on at any time, into any class, for reasons of quality control. C. Owen mentioned that any other suggestions can be forwarded to her for considered of incorporation. SFT is aiming for a Fall delivery of courses. D. Senior indicated that the Fire Tech Directors were meeting on May 7th and would discuss the matter further.

MOTION: None

Action: Information only

Attachment: STEAC_Online-Hybrid_Delivery_Policy_4-10-2009

Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee Minutes, July 17, 2009

V. Old Business

6. Revised Agreement for On-line Hybrid Course Delivery

Issue: Presentation of Revised Draft

Discussion: M. Richwine presented the committee a revised version of the written agreement for any Accredited Regional Training Programs (ARTPs) that wants to deliver Fire Officer courses in an online hybrid format. The agreement was being brought back with the changes that had been suggested during the April meeting and with new language added. He shared that there are several colleges that want to begin delivering classes in the online format this Fall, so the agreements need to start getting distributed so that the interested colleges and ARTPs can complete and submit them to State Fire Training as a condition of their course approval. K. Wagner offered one suggestion for the new language underlined; that the statement “for the sake of exam security” be omitted as platform choice does more than just provide exam security.

MOTION: None Action: Information only

Attachment: STEAC_Online-Hybrid_Delivery_Delivery_Form_7-17-2009